

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 L-03 SS-15 NSC-05 PA-01 USIA-06

PRS-01 SP-02 /077 W

-----111134Z 006626 /15

P 111017Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6704

INFO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: ELAB, ILO

SUBJECT: PREPARATIONS FOR FEBRUARY -MARCH , 1977 SESSION OF ILO
GOVERNING BODY

REF: (A) STATE 28274, (B) COLOMBO 3962

1. AFTER RECEIPT OF REF A FEBRUARY 10, AMBASSADOR CALLED ON DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MDFA) WHO PLED UNFAMILIARITY WITH DETAILS OF ILO AFFAIRS AND REFERRED MATTER TO DIRECTOR OF UN DIVISION OF MDFA, P.M. D. FERNANDO. POLITICAL OFFICER AND LABOR ATTACHE CALLED ON FERNANDO FEBRUARY 11, PRESENTED AIDE-MEMOIRE, AND ORALLY MADE CASE FOR TWO ITEMS SET FORTH IN REF A. WE WERE UNABLE TO MAKE APPOINTMENT WITH OFFICIALS IN MINISTRY OF LABOR BEFORE NEXT WEEK AND WILL REPORT AGAIN AFTER TALKS THERE.

2. DIRECTOR-GENERAL EXPRESSED OPINION THAT GSL OPPOSED THE TREND OF POLITICIZATION IN ILO AND OTHER UN SPECIALIZED AGENCIES. THE SAME POINT HAD BEEN MADE AT POLITICAL LEVEL BY DEPUTY MINISTER OF MDFA LAKSHMAN JAYAKODY DURING HOROWITZ VISIT IN OCTOBER 1976 (REF B).

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3. DIRECTOR, UN AFFAIRS DIVISION, SAID USG PROPOSALS CONTAINED IN AIDE-MEMOIRE WOULD HAVE TO BE REFERRED FIRST TO LABOR MINISTRY TO SEE IF THAT MINISTRY HAD ANY OPINION ON MATTER. IF THE PROPOSALS WERE JUDGED NOT TO REQUIRE LABOR MINISTRY TO TAKE A POSITION, THEY WOULD BE REFERRED BACK TO MDFA FOR DECISION. HE REFERRED TO LATENESS OF RECEIPT OF USG PRESENTATION OF

POSITION AND POINTED OUT THAT IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE TO MAKE A DECISION AND NOTIFY GENEVA REPRESENTATIVES BEFORE OPENING OF GOVERNING BODY MEETING FEBRUARY 14.

4. AS DEPUTY GOVERNMENT MEMBER OF GOVERNING BODY, GSL HAS NO VOTE. HOWEVER, ON PROSPECTS FOR GSL SUPPORT OF USG POSITIONS, FERNANDO SUGGESTED THAT THE QUESTION OF LAYING TO REST THE RESOLUTION CONDEMNING ISRAEL MIGHT BE "SENSITIVE" IF THE ARABS DECIDED TO TAKE A HARD LINE ON THE MATTER. HE HELD OUT GREATER HOPE FOR THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 17, AGREEING THAT IT WAS LESS POLITICALLY-CHARGED ISSUE.

5. COMMENT: FERNANDO AS WELL AS DIRECTOR-GENERAL WERE SOMEWHAT VAGUE, LEADING US TO BELIEVE THAT THEY WERE NOT NECESSARILY IN OPPOSITION TO USG POSITION BUT THAT THEY WERE HONESTLY NOT FOCUSING ON ILO QUESTIONS. GSL DOES NOT PLAN TO SEND DELEGATION TO GENEVA AND, AS HAS HAPPENED BEFORE, IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT GSL AMBASSADOR IN GENEVA, SUSANTA DE ALWIS, WILL BE GIVEN SOME AUTONOMY IN HIS ACTIONS ON THIS MATTER. IT MIGHT BEHOOVE US DELEGATES TO APPROACH DE ALWIS ON THE SUBJECT.
REED

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